

which the chamber has played a part during his tenure, beginning with the
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into teams to tackle subjects.

Trustee Doug Ashburn questioned the need for new classrooms, saying he thought the existing school had adequate space for

\$500,000 worth of upgrades in American with Disabilities Act requirements and fire alarms and \$600,000 for installing six activity buildings
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Sam's Club opens its newest store

By ZACH MAXWELL

Staff writer

Sporting 7,000 more members than the city it is in, Sam's Club in Lufkin opened its doors Tuesday at a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 9 a.m.

Brett Byrum, general manager of the store located at 400 N. Timberland Drive, along with Lufkin Police Chief Sherman Collins and area commerce leaders, opened the doors to an estimated crowd of 400.

"We're expecting about 5,000 people through the store today," Byrum said. "We signed up about 7,000 to 8,000 in the days before we opened."

He estimated the store's total membership at about 42,000, well over Lufkin's estimated 1996 population of 35,000. Many residents of Nacogdoches and other East Texas communities are members, according to Byrum.

Nearly half of those members formerly had to drive to Longview and Tyler to find a Sam's Club.

"We just want to help lower the cost of living here," Byrum said. He said Sam's will offer much new merchandise not before available in Lufkin.

One thing unavailable in Towne Square Center was parking. Several county sheriff's deputies were on hand to direct traffic, and employees were shuttled from their designated parking areas at the Angelina County Exposition Center.

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Christine Samford/The Lufkin Daily News

Sam's Club employee Josh Morris, right, helps Ellis, left, and Phyllis Sibley find their way through the crowd at Sam's grand opening.